



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

Atsushi Tomita

Application No.: 09/810,489

Filing Date: March 19, 2001

Title: EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT APPARATUS, EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, AND EQUIPMENT

Group Art Unit: 2157

Examiner: ABDULLAHI ELM I SALAD

Confirmation No.: 8259

AMENDMENT/REPLY TRANSMITTAL LETTER

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Enclosed is a reply for the above-identified patent application.

☐ A Petition for Extension of Time is also enclosed.

☐ Terminal Disclaimer(s) and the ☐ \$65.00 (2814) ☐ \$130.00 (1814) fee per Disclaimer due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.20(d) are also enclosed.

☐ Also enclosed is/are _____

☐ Small entity status is hereby claimed.

☐ Applicant(s) requests continued examination under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114 and enclose the ☐ \$395.00 (2801) ☐ \$790.00 (1801) fee due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(e).

☐ Applicant(s) requests that any previously unentered after final amendments not be entered. Continued examination is requested based on the enclosed documents identified above.

☐ Applicant(s) previously submitted _____

on _____
for which continued examination is requested.

☐ Applicant(s) requests suspension of action by the Office until at least _____, which does not exceed three months from the filing of this RCE, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.103(c). The required fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(i) is enclosed.

☐ A Request for Entry and Consideration of Submission under 37 C.F.R. § 1.129(a) (1809/2809) is also enclosed.

- ☒ No additional claim fee is required.
- ☐ An additional claim fee is required, and is calculated as shown below.

AMENDED CLAIMS					
	No. of Claims	Highest No. of Claims Previously Paid For	Extra Claims	Rate	Additional Fee
Total Claims	15	MINUS 20 =	0	x \$50.00 (1202) =	\$ 0.00
Independent Claims	6	MINUS 6 =	0	x \$200.00 (1201) =	\$ 0.00
If Amendment adds multiple dependent claims, add \$360.00 (1203)					
Total Claim Amendment Fee					\$ 0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Entity Status claimed - subtract 50% of Total Claim Amendment Fee					\$ 0.00
TOTAL ADDITIONAL CLAIM FEE DUE FOR THIS AMENDMENT					\$ 0.00

- ☐ A check in the amount of _____ is enclosed for the fee due.
- ☐ Charge _____ to Deposit Account No. 02-4800.
- ☐ Charge _____ to credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.


The Director is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16, 1.17, 1.20(d) and 1.21 that may be required by this paper, and to credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 02-4800. This paper is submitted in duplicate.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620

Date: February 15, 2005

By 
James A. LaBarre
Registration No. 28,632



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APPARATUS, EQUIPMENT)	
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, AND)	
EQUIPMENT)	

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated November 17, 2004, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-8, 12 and 14. The allowance of claims 9-11, 13 and 15 is noted with appreciation.

Claims 1-8, 12 and 14 were rejected under 35 USC 102 on the grounds that they were considered to be anticipated by the Carcerano et al patent (US 6,308,205). It is respectfully submitted, however, that the Carcerano patent neither anticipates, nor otherwise suggests, the subject matter of the rejected claims.

The rejected claims are directed to an apparatus, system and method in which a plurality of items of equipment, e.g. image-forming devices such as copiers, are managed via a centralized management apparatus. Typically, when a trouble condition occurs in one of the items of equipment, information about that condition is transmitted to the centralized management apparatus. In accordance with the claimed subject matter, when this trouble condition information is transmitted, management information about *another* item of

equipment is transmitted with it. As a result, when a service engineer is dispatched to repair the trouble condition in the one item of equipment, he can also perform routine maintenance on the other item of equipment at the same time, if the transmitted management information indicates that such maintenance will be due soon. This feature of the invention avoids the need to dispatch the service engineer multiple times. See the specification, for example, at page 51, lines 8-27.

The Carcerano patent is directed to a system that allows network administrators to use a web browser to view and update the configuration of network devices. Referring to Figure 5 of the patent, for instance, an administrator at a workstation 70 can employ a browser running on that workstation to view the configuration of a device 111 on the network, and change its configuration by recording the changes in a database 105. In the system of this patent, information about the configuration of a device is sent to the workstation in response to a request that is sent by the administrator from the workstation 70 to a server 45 running the network management system 109. See column 11, lines 38-50.

The Carcerano does not deal with the situation in which a trouble condition occurs at one of the devices. It does not disclose that, when a trouble condition is detected, information about that condition is transmitted to the workstation 70. More importantly, it does not disclose that information about a trouble condition for one device, and management information for *a second device* is sent to the workstation.

In rejecting the claims, the Office Action refers to the printer server 37 as a detector for detecting trouble that occurs in a first item of equipment, namely printer/copier 36.

The Office Action then goes on to suggest that the NIC 50 is a transmission controller that transmits management information about a second item of equipment together with the trouble information about the first item of equipment, with reference to column 4, lines 48-64 and column 6, lines 1-11. However, the Action identifies the *same* item of equipment, namely the printer/copier 36, as the second item of equipment. It is respectfully submitted that the printer/copier 36 cannot be both the first item of equipment having the trouble condition and a second item of equipment "which is other than the first equipment," as recited in claims 1, 12 and 14.

It is respectfully submitted that the referenced portions of the patent, namely column 4, lines 48-64 and column 6, lines 1-11, do not contain any disclosure suggesting that, when information regarding a trouble condition in one item of equipment is transmitted to a centralized management apparatus, management information about a second, *different* item of equipment is transmitted together with it. The Carcerano only discloses that, when an administrator sends a request to view the configuration of a selected device, information about *that* device is sent in response. There is no disclosure that information about multiple devices is sent together in one transmission.

For at least the foregoing reason, therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the Carcerano patent does not anticipate the subject matter of the rejected claims. In addition, other differences between the present invention and the Carcerano patent are set forth in the dependent claims. In light of the fundamental distinction identified above, however, a detailed discussion of these other differences is believed to be unnecessary at this time.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of all pending claims, are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

Date: February 15, 2005

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